USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

NSC-68 AND THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM

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ABSTRACT

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   While there have been many successes in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), U.S. momentum has been sapped due to the war in Iraq, and the sheer number of missions included under the GWOT umbrella.   While thousands diligently work and fight the GWOT, there is no overarching plan which defines the threat and a course of action. Half a century ago, the U.S. faced the similar issue of a rising threat--communism. NSC-68, a report to the National Security Council, was a strategic level Mission Analysis that determined the ends, ways, and means of countering the communist threat, and became the philosophical framework for waging the Cold War. This paper follows the spirit of NSC-68 in the hopes of shedding much needed light and direction on a conflict whose length will soon surpass that of U.S. involvement in World War II. Like its predecessor, the answer for the current threat spans the breadth of the U.S. elements of national power, and more than ever before, will require unity of effort across the government, if not the outright overhaul of a government still better organized to counter the communist threat originally envisioned by NSC-68.

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> The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature. This is the first of all strategic questions and the most comprehensive.

> - Carl von Clausewitz[1]

To today's generation of senior military leaders, Clausewitz' dictum is as recognizable as the monthly Leave and Earnings Statement. Over years of professional military education, officers are formally exposed, perhaps overexposed, to Clausewitz at virtually every pay grade. Yet, when one objectively views the variety of enemies and agendas being prosecuted under the Global War on Terrorism umbrella, can we honestly say we are acting in accordance with Clausewitz' advice?[2]

What is the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT)? It is certainly global. As Jeffrey Record points out, American enemies in the GWOT include terrorist organizations at the national, regional, and global level, rogue states, weapons of mass destruction proliferators, and failed states that either knowingly or unknowingly harbor terrorists.[3] To lump this expanse of geography, peoples, and issues solely under the rubric of terrorism is a gross simplification that can only lead to an unfocused and confused strategy. Rogue states *are* an issue, and the threat of a nuclear-armed Iran and North Korea are national security concerns, but the strategy to deal with these states should not be tied to the GWOT.

These issues deserve their own analysis and unique justification for action. As the American experience in Iraq seems to show, anything less is a recipe for international disapproval, domestic confusion, and unfocused action. The U.S. has many vexing problems around the world, and as the September 11 attacks come into better focus, it is clear that they are not all directly related to the GWOT. The time has come to perform an objective inventory of these problems and deal with them in accordance with their own nature.

For the GWOT, this means culling many ancillary and distracting missions and discovering just who and what the enemy truly is. In military operations, the first step in planning is called "Mission Analysis." A proper mission analysis is the foundation used to come to grips with the nature of the problem, specified and implied tasks, assumptions, and finally, a mission statement. In the quest for action in the GWOT, from the Interagency level and up, the

United States has garbled mission analysis for three years, leading to unfocused action and over-reliance on the military instrument of power.

A recurring theme from the recently completed 9/11 Commission Report was "nobody is in charge."[4] While the President of the United States and hundreds of thousands of others are diligently working and fighting in the GWOT, on a day-to-day basis, nobody is truly in charge of the GWOT, and there is no overarching plan to define the threats and the ends, ways, and means to deal with them. Half a century ago, the United States faced the similar issue of a rising, largely unanticipated threat—communism. The National Security Act of 1947 established a framework for the President "to coordinate foreign policy and defense policy, and to reconcile diplomatic and military commitments and requirements."[5] This act gave the President the organizational power and tools to more effectively focus and achieve unified action across the government. This legislation brought into existence the Department of Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the National Security Council.[6] President Harry Truman was the first president to harness the power of this reorganization. On 31 January 1950, Truman directed the newly formed National Security Council to conduct "a reexamination of our objectives in peace and war and of the effect of these objectives on our strategic plans."[7] On 7 April 1950, NSC-68 was completed and delivered.

NSC-68, a report to the National Security Council, became the document that laid the philosophical framework for how the United States would respond to the communist threat. [8] Over the years, NSC-68 was accepted as the course of action "America must pursue for as long as it is a global power…a statement of the need for America to conduct a security policy in which foreign policy and military policy are closely coordinated, and a plea to devote adequate resources to both."[9] Pundits note the lack of any governmental thinking today which approaches the level and coherence attained by Paul Nitze and his group in 1950.[10] NSC-68 was a strategic level mission analysis that determined the ends, ways, and means of countering the communist threat. The framework and the systematic approach of NSC-68 were simple and straightforward. Complementing the methodology was Nitze's masterful staffing and consensus building for the document throughout the government.[11] The federal government has changed, however, and the interagency of today is the morbidly obese descendant of 1950. The task, however, is no less important now than it was then, and the requirement for an integrated interagency approach to the GWOT remains unfulfilled. In this sense, NSC-68 may have great utility today. This paper explores that notion in greater depth. Can an NSC-68 styled "Mission Analysis" of the GWOT provide the government with the clarity and direction needed to achieve unified action in its prosecution?

LIMITATIONS AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

NSC-68 began with a background of the communist crisis, and then moved on to discuss the fundamental purposes of the United States and the Soviet Union, underlying conflicts, and the intentions and capabilities of both parties. Finally, the report identified risks, atomic weapons considerations, and possible courses of action. This paper will adopt a similarly systematic approach, beginning with the background of events leading up to September 11, 2001, followed by a discussion of the strategic objectives of both the United States and its adversary, the most likely enemy course of action, and finally a proposed strategic approach and recommendations. While not following NSC-68 in a lockstep manner, the paper will follow its spirit in the hopes of providing direction for a conflict whose length will soon surpass that of U.S. involvement in World War II.

BACKGROUND OF THE CURRENT CRISIS

To understand the current crisis, we must begin with an accurate definition of the enemy. The enemy is not terrorism, which is merely a tactic. As the dialogue is beginning to reflect, a "war on terrorism" is like calling World War II a "war on blitzkrieg and kamikazes."[12] The United States is fighting people who use terror as a tactic—but that is not a good enough distinction either. The Irish Republican Army uses terrorism, as does the Sendero Luminoso, Basque separatists, and dozens of other organizations. The United States does not have a direct quarrel with these groups, terrorists all of them.

The current war is with a specific enemy that has consistently and brazenly shown its identity and agenda through several decades of action. They killed 241 U.S. Marines in Beirut in 1983, bombed the World Trade Center and Khobar Towers in 1993 and 1996 respectively, bombed U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, attacked the USS Cole in 2000, and finally took down the Twin Towers in 2001 in an attack that was as ruthless as it was brilliant in its planning, organization, and execution. This war is with Islamist radicals who use terror as a weapon. While their tactics are unconventional, their composition comes mostly from a homogenous pool: young male Muslims of Middle Eastern descent.

In the second half of the twentieth century, a combination of events in the Muslim world has delivered the Islamist threat we face today—a fundamentalist resurgence, fueled by real and imagined transgressions, and organized by technology and galvanizing events, has yielded something much greater than the sum of its parts. Fundamentalism is a broad based occurrence not limited to Islam. Jeffrey K. Hadden and Anson Shupe define fundamentalism as "a proclamation of reclaimed authority…which is to be reinstated as an antidote for a society

that has strayed from its cultural moorings." They go on to state that fundamentalists see a seamless governmental/religious relationship.[13]

All religions have elements operating on the fringes of mainstream beliefs. While Islam is no different from Christianity in its propensity for fringe elements, it is fundamentally different in its direction. Whereas Christianity is a forward-looking religion with the promise of judgment, resurrection, and the best days in front of the believer; Islam frequently looks back to its origins as the truly glorious period. To many Muslims, the struggle, community, and family values enjoyed when the Prophet Muhammad walked the earth represent an ideal life that all Muslims should strive to attain again.[14]

In the Muslim world, and particularly to fundamentalists, this golden age often stands in stark contrast to the realities of modern life. The history of Islam is replete with episodes of dissatisfaction with the status quo, as members of the faith sense themselves and their community drifting away from the ideal described above. This cycle establishes a natural tension between "true" Islam and anything pulling Muslims away from the straight path. Targets of these true believers can be secular trends/issues, or individuals with differing religious interpretations, societal trends, or outright invasions such as the Crusades. The individual cause is not as important as the propensity itself: Islam's predisposition to periods of resurgence and overhaul of the status quo in an effort to return to the golden age of Muhammad.[15]

Tossed into this naturally volatile cycle has been the powder keg of twentieth century events. Since the end of the First World War, when Great Britain drew lines on maps to define new countries, the Muslim World has seen itself subjected to one humiliation after another, and as Thomas L. Friedman posits, "humiliation is the single most underestimated factor in international relations."[16] While the list of real and self-perceived injuries to Muslims is long, all place a distant second to the existence of Israel. Muslims almost universally regard the creation of Israel as an outrage to the people and country of Palestine, and by extension, all Arabs (and many Muslims). Israel is an important lens through which Muslims view the West—particularly the United States. America's unwavering support of Israel, at the expense of Palestinians, is a consistent generator of anti-western feelings that continue to galvanize the Arab world. Crushing Israeli military defeats of every neighboring Arab country compounded by the occupation of lands gained in various Israeli-Arab wars has furthered the humiliation.

The Israeli issue has become an Arab/Muslim touchstone, with grievances having nothing to do with the conflict readily transferred to it. With the Arab media filled with images of U.S. made F-16s and Apache helicopters killing Palestinians, and resolute economic and political

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support to Israel, the United States is inextricably linked to Israeli actions. A solution of the Israeli-Palestinian question is the most difficult and most important step to be taken in securing a lasting peace with the Muslim world. In the meantime, the status quo stands as the single greatest rallying point for radical Islam.[17]

In the Muslim world, there is no shortage of rallying issues. Unresponsive and corrupt governments, continuously supported by the United States, are largely the rule in the Middle East, while the considerable U.S. presence since 1990 is an abomination to many Muslims.[18] Globalization and the markets, opportunities, and open governments it tends to foster have mostly skipped over the Middle East. Even with oil, many Arabs are unemployed, unfulfilled, and seething with resentment as a result. As Eric Hoffer points out in his classic, *The True Believer*, "when people are ripe for a mass movement, they are usually ripe for any effective movement, and not solely for one with a particular doctrine or program."[19] Many humiliated young men have found a direction in radical Islam.

With a culture predisposed to the resurgent message of Islam, and fueled by resentment of Israel's existence and hard-nosed policies, U.S. presence, corrupt governments, secularization, and humiliation, Islamist terrorism needed one final ingredient in order to go global—organization. In 1979, the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan provided the catalyst. Afghanistan and the subsequent *jihad* opportunity it provided for Muslims from Morocco to Indonesia served the purpose of training and organizing thousands to overcome a common enemy. In a textbook example of the law of unintended consequences, the U.S. financed, equipped, and encouraged the Afghan *mujahadeen*, and other Muslims in what turned out to be the last fight of the Cold War. The *mujahadeen* later became the Taliban, and others returned home victorious, trained, and organized.[20] Volumes have already been written on Al Qaeda: this organization is the extreme manifestation of a religion and culture in a period of great change, given the tools of organization through Afghanistan, petro-dollars, and the Internet, doused liberally with the jet fuel of Israel, and ignited with the blowtorch of frustration, globalization, and pick-your-humiliation. Viewed in this light, an end result less than something catastrophic may have been more surprising than the events of September 11 itself.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF THE UNITED STATES AND RADICAL ISLAM

NSC-68 spelled out the fundamental purpose of the United States: "to assure the integrity and vitality of our free society, which is founded upon the dignity and worth of the individual."[21] Half a century later, the National Security Strategy of the United States remains consistent with that message, and is "based on a distinctly American internationalism that reflects the union of

our values and our national interests. The aim of this strategy is to help make the world not just safer but better. Our goals on the path to progress are clear: political and economic freedom, peaceful relations with other states, and respect for human dignity."[22]

The aim of the radical Islamist can best be derived from a definition. The 9/11 Commission Report defines radical Islamism as a "militant, anti-democratic movement, bearing a holistic vision of Islam whose final aim is the restoration of the caliphate."[23] In Sunni Islam, the Caliph is the leader of the Muslim community, and is seen as Muhammad's successor. Leadership passed from caliph to caliph from the time of Muhammad's death in 633 CE until 1924, when the caliphate was abolished by the secular Turkish government of Kemal Ataturk. Wars have been fought over who the Caliph should be, and the question of caliph lineage remains a Sunni-Shia divider today (Shi'ites use the term *imam*, and believe that legitimate successors of Muhammad must be his direct descendents.)[24] As documented in *The Historical Dictionary of Islam,* "some present-day Islamist and fundamentalist groups want to restore the caliphate and establish an Islamic state in which the *shari'a* (Islamic law) is the sole law."[25]

A return of the caliphate as a governing Muslim entity is not a goal of mainstream Islam. It would constitute a giant leap backward to theocracy, strict adherence to *shari'a*, and the probable dissolution of Arab states as we know them. Expected in this new order would be a rejection of all things Western and an isolationist yet aggressive worldview. It is an impossible scenario for an open and oil dependent West to accept, and equally unlikely for the Muslim world to ever attain. Nevertheless, this vision burns brightly in enough Islamists to present the United States with some of the problems of today.

For the Islamist, the greatest obstacle in returning to the caliphate lies not with the West, but within Muslim society itself. Although the Muslim road to globalization and modernity is rocky, they are on that road, and the direction of 1.2 billion people cannot easily be reversed regardless of fiery actions and rhetoric. Islamists are fully aware of this, and yet the West— particularly the United States—has become their common enemy.

The reasons for this go to the heart of the conflict. Under the best of circumstances, the progress oriented, technology-driven, and open American system stands in stark contrast to the vision of Islamists. The very American lifestyle is seen as an insidious threat and temptation on the Muslim street, pulling Muslims away from the straight path. Islamists see nothing subtle in this threat; in their view, America has attacked Islam culturally and militarily. Moreover, they view America's unwavering support of Israel and any moderate Muslim regime, combined with over a decades worth of military presence, as an act of war.[26] Islamists have used these issues as a means to galvanize their followers while simultaneously pulling them to their version of

Islam's straight path. "America as Enemy" allows those willing in Muslim society to transfer their problems and the roots of their problems onto America's shoulders. The U.S. is the perfect foil for the Islamists--if America did not exist, they would have to invent it.

From a U.S. standpoint, the Islamic agenda is a direct threat to the vital interests of the United States. While Al Qaeda's attacks have provided a legitimate *casus belli*, the U.S. was inevitably on a collision course with the Islamists anyway. Globalization is to the American 21st century what Manifest Destiny was to the 19th century. The United States is driving a global economic freight train, and you can get on board or get run over.[27]

Both sides bear responsibility in pushing these issues past the breaking point. For the Islamists, if any part of the Pearl Harbor/911 analogy fits, it is Admiral Yamamoto's recognition of America as an awakened "sleeping giant." The United States has been a rhetorical and sometimes physical punching bag for the radical Islamist for many years (although their actions have become more focused over the past decade). The attacks of September 11 clearly crossed the line however, and made open conflict with radical Islam impossible to avoid.

America's role in nurturing the growing conflict follows a typical post-World War II pattern, best viewed as a combination of good intentions and bad execution. The U.S. National Security Strategy, open and full of global opportunity to Americans, comes across as heavy-handed and threatening to others (U.S. allies included). The U.S. failure to understand and empathize with Muslim issues has led to an overwhelmingly negative view of America in the Muslim world, and a public relations hole that seems to get deeper with every dollar and program Americans pour into it.

ISLAMIST INTENTIONS AND CAPABILITIES

NSC-68's analysis of the Soviet Union's intentions is well worth reviewing and comparing with the intentions of the radical Islamists. Both the Soviets and Islamists foresaw a world dominated by their ideas, and both built a foundation at home with the subjugation of their people. Armed with the tools of the modern state, the Soviets were able to accomplish this quite effectively. Prior to World War II, collectivization, purges, and the vagaries of the powerful acted to corral the population through propaganda, murder and fear. After the war, the Iron Curtain descended across Eastern Europe and served to consolidate Soviet gains in a like manner on a more continental scale.

Fundamentalists have managed to erect an "Islamist Curtain" of their own. The power of religion—stronger than any armored division or secret police force—has been hijacked by the Islamists to become an international straitjacket imposed on Muslims everywhere. Within many

Muslim countries, governments have bought off and financed radical Islamists in the hopes of appeasing and directing their agendas elsewhere. Aiding the Islamist effort is what Bassam Tibi refers to as "the de-legitimization of the nation-state in the World of Islam,"[28] where nations are led by "dynastic families" with "poor human rights records, little experience of peaceful transition between regimes, and few of the liberal institutions of civil society," who continue to disenfranchise their citizens.[29] The leaders of these countries largely and self-servingly remain silent, enabling the Islamists to "collectivize" their religion across borders. This strategy may ultimately be counterproductive, bringing home more cohesive and dangerous threats, as the recent rash of Islamist terror within Saudi Arabia seems to suggest. Secular Muslim governments should have no illusions—radical Islam has no tolerance or place for them. The Taliban of Afghanistan embodied the type of governmental organization Islamists would like to establish throughout the Muslim world; governments in Iran and Sudan provide other examples.

The exportation and subjugating power of radical Islam goes beyond Muslim countries. It is alive and thriving in Western Europe and the United States. The *New York Times* recently ran an opinion article entitled "Hate at the Local Mosque," which described a young firebrand delivering a sermon which "railed against man-made doctrines that replace Islamic law, and excoriated the "enemies of Islam" who deny strict adherence to…the ways of Muhammad."[30] The writer noted how passivity within her mosque had allowed young male extremists to usurp the tone and direction of her place of worship; which is located in Morgantown, West Virginia— Smalltown, USA. The very ideals and governments the Islamists hope to bring down provide them the sanctuary and freedom for radicalizing and organizing Muslims against the United States.

Repeatedly, when discussing the power of the Islamists, the passive acceptance of the majority of Muslims is noted. Passivity among the masses is power given to the vocal minority. This is a religion so confused with its place in the world that its members will tolerate a *fatwa* issued against author Salman Rushdie for passages in *The Satanic Verses*; yet remain stone silent in this regard with Osama bin Laden, a man who has done incalculable damage to Islam, and yet is actually a hero to millions.[31]

The Islamists have no Gross Domestic Product, stock market, or other conventional economic indicators; nevertheless, they do have an ability to influence economies. Markets rise and fall on Islamist terror activities, and the friction of the GWOT has certainly driven oil prices higher, and absorbed billions of dollars in force protection measures and direct combat. The global economy reacted directly to the September 11 attacks, and future attacks may well include financial nodes. Still, as expensive as the GWOT is, the long term impact of radical

Islam on the global economy is the equivalent of crop damage—catastrophic to some individuals, but overall, merely a nuisance.

A *dar al-Islam*, an Islamic territory which absorbs a group of Muslim nations, could be another matter.[32] Petro-dollars and radical Islam would be a potent combination, allowing tremendous economic clout—some would argue that Saudi Arabia today is such a country. With Iran, the world has seen the ability of an Islamic theocracy with deep pockets to destabilize the region somewhat; yet, the market for Iranian oil is rock solid. A Persian Gulf lined with like-minded countries could have frightening power.

Radical Islam has no conventional military or fielded forces. This is a strength in the sense that they can never be definitively defeated. Following classic Maoist guerilla theory, the Islamist can hide in a sea of people and engage when and where he chooses. As long as the people permit their presence, their military capability will remain. Eventually in Maoist theory, however, a guerilla force must become conventional in order to seize power. The United States, the most powerful conventional force in the world, would love to see such an occurrence—which is precisely why it will not happen. As a 1992 RAND study describes future U.S. adversaries, they "will no more seek to confront U.S. power on U.S. terms than David would have gone out against Goliath with a sword and shield."[33] The radical Islamist movement has, of necessity, gone in an asymmetric direction, relying on non-conventional forces, decentralized organization, and suicide attacks. Chillingly, Islamists have also come to the same conclusion as the Indian diplomat who remarked that the main lesson of 1991's Gulf War was "never fight the U.S. without nuclear weapons."[34]

There is a hierarchy within the Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) classification, and everything else places a distant second to nuclear weapons. By all accounts the Holy Grail of Islamists—if they get it, the United States must assume they will use it. The deterrence theory so highly evolved in the Cold War is muddied when dealing with a stateless enemy, who may not be able to be deterred at all. A nuclear attack on the United States may provide Islamic terrorists with a high payoff. Despite all the efforts to destroy them, the terrorists would prove themselves alive and dangerous. This event would likely gain Islamists as much credibility (and acclaim) within the Muslim world as it would disgust—there is little doubt that some Muslims would literally dance in the streets following such a cataclysm. Beyond the Muslim world, the Islamists may gain as much as they lose as well. It is hard to imagine the United States not retaliating in kind—against someone. In the emotional aftermath of a nuclear attack on American soil, it is likely that U.S. leaders would not make coldly rational decisions. Even if the right target were found, any nuclear response would provide additional benefit to the Islamist

cause. A U.S. nuclear exchange in the Middle East would be the final exclamation point on a half century of American meddling in the region, making the Islamist case on the continuing crusade against Islam, and the ultimately catastrophic influence of the West.

U.S. STRATEGIC APPROACH

NSC-68 described American intentions as "designed to foster a world environment in which the American system can survive and flourish. It therefore rejects the concept of isolation and affirms the necessity of our positive participation in the world community."[35] Nothing has changed in this basic outlook over the past half century, and the rhetoric is entirely consistent with the U.S. stance on globalization.

In dealing with Islamist terrorism, "containment" is problematic. In the Cold War, neither side ever directly attacked the other, due to the risk of nuclear escalation. Having been attacked today, U.S. policy is to kill Islamist terrorists on their territory. It is an aggressive policy long on military kinetic energy, and short on the other instruments of national power.[36] With the President's stated "you're either with us or against us" policy, the United States is prosecuting an incredibly complex and vague war with the presupposed clarity of the Cold War.

As a result, a large portion of the U.S. government is underemployed in the GWOT. In prosecuting this war as if unconditional surrender was the goal, the United States has fully invested the military instrument of national power, while largely relegating the rest of government to supporting (or non-existent) roles. The recently released Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communications comes to the same conclusion, stating that the United States has failed in communicating its strategic direction both at home and abroad, and can only succeed in the GWOT if the government harnesses all of the instruments of national power.[37]

Diplomatically, American efforts seem to be aimed primarily at coalition building and maintenance: vital aspects, but not ones which address root causes of instability in the region, such as the Israel-Palestine issue and barely legitimate governments. Nation-building, a term viewed with repugnance by many Americans, has a place in the GWOT. Visibly underway in places like Iraq and Afghanistan, more finessed approaches should be attempted in the domestic pressure cookers of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Kuwait, Pakistan, and Iran. America's expedient policy of securing access to Middle East oil has exacerbated the internal issues of many Muslim nations. Middle East stability is larger than the unfettered flow of tankers through the Straits of Hormuz, and U.S. policy must fundamentally transform to embrace a longer-term view. An intellectually honest approach to planning this policy might begin with the question,

"assuming the United States overcame its reliance on Middle East oil by the year 2025, what should the region look like?"

On the economic front, despite its massive size, it is difficult to bring the U.S. economy to bear on the GWOT. Directing more of America's Gross Domestic Product to defense spending will ultimately have little effect on this war. Long-term solutions to global energy requirements and globalization issues will yield the strongest returns. Globalization is by definition a dog-eat-dog world, but somewhere, allowances and mechanisms must be established to ease the entrance requirements for those nations which are not yet aboard. Nothing will marginalize the Islamist terrorist, swimming in a sea of people, more readily than a globally enfranchised Muslim world. As it stands today, the U.S. economy is more a liability than an asset in the GWOT. Dependent on Arab oil for the smooth operation of the economy, the United States compromises with Middle East countries myopically oriented on maximizing oil revenue and remaining in power, thus providing ample ammunition to Islamists.

While the military instrument of power is fully employed, it remains a Cold War relic unsuited for a 21st century war. Ongoing transformation efforts within the military should be synchronized with the other instruments of power to focus more on nation-building and peace-making, and less on the "full spectrum dominance" strategies aimed at equipping a force for an unknown future peer competitor. Special-forces, linguists, and psychologists may be more the front line troops in the GWOT (and any war with non-state actors) than targeting cells, F-22s and Stryker Brigades.[38] Fundamental issues concerning the right structure of military forces remain unexplored, as the U.S. clings to the narcotic of high-tech equipment supplied by the defense industry.

Packaging and integrating a much more grand strategy through the informational instrument of power is an enormous and essential task left yet undone and mostly unstarted.[39] In its voluminous report, the Task Force on Strategic Communications clearly places the onus of communication on the President of the United States, while outlining a governmental effort of massive scope to focus an information campaign on the GWOT. Indeed, the report goes beyond the GWOT, stating "we must understand the United States is engaged in a generational and global struggle about ideas, not a war between the West and Islam. It is more than a war against the tactic of terrorism."[40] Strategic communications must be aimed domestically and internationally. The GWOT is politicized and unfocused. To deal with the Islamist enemy, the U.S. must plainly label them, distinguish them from the war in Iraq, and build support for action against them based on national goals of global interdependence and human rights.

In the words of President Bush, "this is hard work," and not necessarily politically popular. The U.S. must negotiate with the terrorists, but not in a traditional way. Government leaders should never sit at a table with Osama bin Laden, but rather negotiate with the Muslim world by its example of consistently steadfast, predictable, and equitable actions. Through such methods, the U.S. can show the Islamists and the rest of the world exactly where it is headed in the GWOT. Like any negotiation, there must be compromise. In dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian issues, the United States has compromised very little, and is acting inconsistently with its own stated position on human rights. An honest and equitable approach to this issue would simultaneously be the right thing to do, while "giving" on an issue of great significance to the Muslim world, and undercutting any Islamist moral high ground. Viewed in this light, negotiations are possible and profitable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

NSC-68 portrayed the Soviet Union and communism as monolithic threats requiring a long-term concerted effort to defeat. Philosophically, the global allure of communism seemed very real and threatening to Americans. Physically, the reality of so many nuclear weapons in the hands of so many people was undeniably menacing. It was an era of real peril magnified by the fear of the unknown.

Things are not as bleak today. Communism, as it turned out, was not monolithic, and neither is radical Islam. As Olivier Roy states in *Globalized Islam* , "the movement is a security threat, but it lacks a strategic agenda."[41] Militant Islamists represent a small faction of the Muslim faith that over the long haul cannot sustain themselves, let alone restore the Caliphate.[42] The Islamist vision does not agree with human nature. Draconian theocracies lose something in the translation from revolutionary fervor to normalcy. There are no success stories: the Taliban were a failed government, and the final adjustment in Iran and Sudan has yet to occur. Radical Islam will run its course through this period of resurgence, and ultimately wane—the requirement for the United States is to do everything in its power to hasten the process and lessen Islamist impact. This demands a strategy that harnesses and synchronizes the U.S. instruments of power. Accordingly, the following recommendations are offered:

- Refocus and strengthen U.S. military prosecution of the GWOT. The U.S. had great success in Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, and elsewhere; however, the war in Iraq greatly confused and diluted these efforts. Iraq, Iran, and North Korea are (were) rogue states with only vague ties to Islamist terror, and the U.S. has

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squandered GWOT clarity, momentum, and legitimacy in bringing these countries into the GWOT discussion.[43]

- Develop alternative energy sources. Energy and Western reliance on Middle East oil is a critical vulnerability that drives U.S. decision-making. A 21st Century Manhattan Project is needed to drive America to new energy sources. A non-petroleum low-cost energy source would greatly reduce the significance of the Middle East on the world stage with correspondingly castrating effects on global Islamist influence. Don't buy more F-22s or SUVs—invest in alternative energy.

- Defuse the Israel-Palestine issue. The most credible Islamist rallying issue centers on the Israeli-Palestinian question. Some resolution on this issue is a necessity for any kind of Middle East peace. Granted, many Islamists will not be satisfied with anything less than an Israeli exodus from the region, but most of their venomous message will be dissipated the day a solution is enacted.

- Greater U.S. government interagency participation. The military has been the main effort in the government's campaign against terrorism. While military forces continue to be important, other members of the interagency should now take the lead. The military can and should continue to kill Islamist terrorists as we find them, and should adjust its transformation agenda to accurately reflect 21st century threats.

Greater interagency participation will likely require governmental reorganization. This should be done thoughtfully. Reorganizing is a painful and drawn out evolution with no guarantee of success, and should not be attempted as a knee-jerk attempt to "do something." If the instruments of national power are the tools for fighting the GWOT, then the war should be fought from the cabinet level of government rather than the combatant command level. The Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 was tremendously effective at reorganizing the Department of Defense in order to achieve unified action among the armed forces. A similar approach is needed today aimed at the cabinet level of government to harness all agencies to pull as one against threats requiring more than a predominately military approach. The Department of Homeland Security was established after the September 11th attacks to protect the U.S. domestically. A logical next step may establish a "Department of International Security," which recognizes that threats are best dealt with preemptively and far from American soil through nation-building efforts. Any reorganization must encompass cogent and integrated strategic communications.

The United States has achieved great success in the GWOT. The most formidable adversary to date has not been Al Qaeda, but rather the United States itself. The failure of the U.S. Government at the interagency level and above to communicate, organize, and focus this war has severely limited the power this country is capable of exerting. Half a century ago, NSC-68 provided a simple yet elegant mechanism to bring about U.S. unity of effort in fighting the Cold War. Today, the U.S. government would be wise to put away the platitudes, put together a planning team, and try this approach again.

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ENDNOTES

[1] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Michael Howard and Peter Paret, eds. and trans. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 75.

[2] Jeffrey Record poses essentially the same question in: Jeffrey Record, "Bounding the Global War on Terrorism," U.S. Army War College, December 2003, 1.

[3] Ibid, 1.

[4] National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report,* (New York, W.W. Norton & Company, 2004.)

[5] "NSC History," *National Security Council*; available from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/history.html#summary>; Internet; accessed 12 February 2005.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Harry Truman to Dean Acheson, 31 January 1950, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950* (Washington, D.C.; Government Printing Office, 1977), 141-42; quoted in, Ernest R. May, *American Cold War Strategy: Interpreting NSC-68*, (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1993), pp. 1−19.

[8] "NSC-68: A Report to the National Security Council," *Naval War College Review,* (May/June 1975, Vol 27, No. 6,) 51-108.

[9] Frederick W. Kagan, "Back to the Future: NSC-68 and the Right Course for America Today," *SAIS Review*, Volume 19, Number 1, Winter-Spring 1999, pp. 55-71.

[10] Joe Klein, "The Fighter Jock and the Gooseslayer," *Time*, 24 October 2004; available from http://www.time.com/time/election2004/columnist/klein/article/0,18471,733762,00.html; Internet; accessed 14 March 2005.

[11] May, 439.

[12] For one, Jonathon Gurwitz, "It's time to call danger by name: Islamo-fascism," *Arizona Daily Star* 4 July 2004, available from http://www.dailystar.com/dailystar/relatedarticles/28530.php; Internet; accessed 15 November 2004.

[13] Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God, The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (Berkeley, University of California Press 2000).

[14] John L. Esposito, *Islam: The Straight Path* (New York, Oxford University Press 1988).

[15] See Wahabism, "a reform movement that began 200 years ago to rid Islamic societies of cultural practices and interpretation that had been acquired over the centuries." Global Security.org, available from <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/intro/islam-salafi.htm >; Internet; accessed 4 February 2005. Wahabism remains very much alive today within Saudi Arabia, and its influence is widely blamed for the radicalization of Islam.

[16] Thomas L. Friedman, *Searching for the Roots of 911,* 50 min., Discovery Channel Store, 2003, videocassette.

[17] Many other world events also provide Islamic rallying issues: the effects of globalization, tensions between secularism and Islam, post-Cold War strategic realignments, and rapid population growth, to name a few: see, Bassam Tibi, *The Challenge of Fundamentalism, Political Islam and the New World Disorder* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1998).

[18] The U.S. military presence in Saudi Arabia is said to have been the main catalyst behind Osama Bin Laden's final plunge into radical Islam and war with the West

[19] Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer* (New York: Harper and Row,1951), 25.

[20] The Central Intelligence Agency coined the term "Blowback" to explain this phenomena, explained in detail in Tim Weiner's article "Blowback from the Afghan Battlefield," *New York Times Magazine*, 13 March 1994. Winston Churchill understood the risk well before the term was coined. Explaining his willingness to ally with the Soviet Union during World War Two, he remarked, "if Hitler were to invade Hell, I would promptly sign a pact with the Devil." Martin Kitchen, "Winston Churchill and the Soviet Union during the Second World War," *The Historical Journal*, 30, (2, 1987); available from <http://www.winstonchurchill.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=531>: Internet; accessed 7 Oct 2004.

[21] "NSC-68: A Report to the National Security Council," 51-108.

[22] George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, September 2002), 1.

[23] National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, page 562.

[24] Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Islam* (London: Scarecrow Press, Inc, 2001), 71.

[25] Ibid, 71.

[26] Ibid, 51.

[27] Thomas L. Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1999.)

[28] Bassam Tibi, *The Challenge of Fundamentalism, Political Islam and the new World Disorder,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 11.

[29] Mathew Horsman and Andrew Marshall, *After the Nation-State: Citizens, Tribalism and the New World Disorder* (London: Harper-Collins, 1994), 150; quoted in Tibi, *The Challenge of Fundamentalism,* 11.

[30] Asra Q. Nomani, "Hate at the Local Mosque," *New YorkTimes*, 6 May 2004, Late Edition - Final, Section A, Page 35, Column 2.

[31]While living and writing in England, Salman Rushdie was sentenced to death by the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini for his portrayal of Islam in the book, *The Satanic Verses.* This comparison of Rushdie and bin Laden was raised in the article "War for Islam's Heart," *The Economist*, 16 Sep 2004. Available from <http://www.economist.com/world/africa/displayStory.cfm?story_id=3199516>; Internet; accessed 4 February 2005.

[32] Adamec, 79.

[33] Bruce W. Bennett et al., *Theater Analysis and Modeling in an Era of Uncertainty: The Present and Future of Warfare* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1994), xvii.

[34] Les Aspin, "National Security in the 1990's: Defining a New Basis for U.S. Military Forces," paper presented to the Atlantic Council of the United States, Washington, D.C., 6 January 1992.

[35] "NSC-68, A Report to the National Security Council", 463.

[36] The instruments of national power available to address issues of national security are known collectively as "DIME" to represent diplomacy, information, the military, and economics. A more comprehensive grouping of the instruments of power is represented by the acronym "MIDLIFE," for: military, information, diplomatic, legal, intelligence, finance, and economics.

[37] Office of the Under Secretary of Defense For Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communications*, (Washington, D.C. Department of Defense, Sep 2004), 5.

[38] "Full Spectrum Dominance" is the foundational concept of the U.S. military blueprint for the future, outlined in the capstone Department of Defense publication, *Joint Vision 2020* available at < http://www.dtic.mil/jointvision/jvpub2.htm>.

[39] Under Secretary of Defense For Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, September 2004).

[40] Ibid.

[41] Olivier Roy, *Globalized Islam, the Search for a New Ummah* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 325.

[42]Jason Burke, "The Arab Backlash Militants Didn't Expect," *The Observer*, 20 June 2004. Available from http://www.worldthreats.com/al-qaeda_terrorism/Arab%20Backlash.htm ; Internet; accessed 14 February 2005.

[43] James Fallows, "Bush's Lost Year," *The Atlantic Monthly,* October 2004. Available from http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/prem/200410/fallows ; Internet; accessed 15 February 2005.

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